

PRAYER

Session 1

Why We Pray

This is the first of six sessions on prayer. In this session we will explore what the point and purpose of prayer is and how it can enhance your spiritual life and your relationship with God. Prayer is the means through which we are able to communicate with God - whether it's to lay bare our poverty and need in petition, giving thanks, or simply stopping and listening to what God is saying to us.

Opening Activities



Centering Moment

Light a candle and observe 30 seconds of silence as a reminder of God's presence among us.



Luke 11:1-2

He was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples." He said to them, "When you pray, say: Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us. And do not bring us to the time of trial."



Reflect

Share in a word or phrase what this prayer means to you. What does "your Kingdom come" mean to you? How well do we live out "we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us"?



Opening Prayer:

Holy God, as the apostle Paul states, we know we do not always pray as we ought, so we thank you for the gift of the Holy Spirit that intercedes on our behalf with sighs too deep for words. Help us as we embark on this journey of prayer to become closer to you. Amen.



Music (optional)

Sing or listen to the Lord's Prayer as a hymn.



Share

Share with one another any thoughts from last weeks' exercises or session.



Watch: Why We Pray



Discuss

- Pastor Rebecca mentions that how we view God affects our prayer life - and our relationship with God. How do you view God? Parent? Friend? Judge? Something else?
- There are many different postures one can use when praying. Standing, kneeling, lying prostrate, bowing, lifting up ones arms/hands, sitting, etc. What is the most common way in which you tend to pray? What prayer postures have you tried?
- Read Psalm 18:1-2. The psalmist employs more than ten images to praise God and name who God is. What images mentioned do you most resonate with? Which images would you add that are missing?
- Read 1 Samuel 3:1-14: What are some of your earliest memories and experiences of prayer? Have you ever experienced God's voice speaking to you and been confused by it?



Closing Prayer

God of relationship, you desire for us to know you deeper. Help guide us as we continue to open the doors of communication with you. Amen.



Weekly Exercises To Do At Home

1. **Practicing Prayer:** Take fifteen minutes each day to be quietly present to God in whatever way you feel led (sitting, walking, observing nature, drawing, shaping playdough/clay, journaling, play meditative music/sounds, etc)
2. **Journaling:** In your journal write down your experience of being present to God. What helps you? What interrupts you?